

Cassie Connelly

This I Believe

Grandma's Coming Through

Some drivers allow their inner child to take control of the wheel. They yell, they squirm, and they let everyone know how horrible it feels to be stuck in such a difficult situation. It could be that being enclosed in a protective covering makes individuals feel empowered to be rude and deviant, or it may just be that driving serves as an outlet for their repressed aggressive emotions. Whatever the reasoning, most drivers accept speeding and getting angry as normal driving behaviors. I, on the other hand, have never been called a speed enthusiast or have been accused of being quick tempered, but I have been called a few other names. I prefer going outside this social norm to earn the title of "Grandma." I believe in putting on my knee high stockings and oversized glasses and hobbling my way into the driver's seat.

I normally go the speed limit, but that is not nearly fast enough for other drivers. When I first learned to drive, it felt infuriating to watch other cars speed pass me and my \$600 dodge intrepid. Now I play a game when I drive. I keep track of passing cars and without speeding up, I find them again. I prefer driving painfully slow compared to other college students because it has taught me to not cut corners and to do honest work. I don't want to say it feels good to watch speeders catch a red light, but it really makes me feel better about driving like a grandma. Driving slowly has taught me a significant life lesson. If you cheat to get ahead, you will only end up stopped at a red light.

Being pulled over by the cops, or losing control of my car are terrifying thoughts that haunt me when I drive. I refuse to speed because it makes my heart race, my muscle tense, and it brings me to the point of feeling death breathing on my neck. When some lady in her fancy car

decides to ride my bumper all the way to school, I refuse to speed up. I need to drive at the speed I feel most comfortable. It takes a strong person to not be pressured into any situation. Saying no to speeding teaches me to not back down when I know something will make me feel uneasy.

Not only am I conscious of my speed when I drive, but I also overly courteous of others. I always use a blinker, even if the road seems vacant. I come to a complete stop when needed, so other drivers know my intentions. Also, when other drivers need to get into my lane, I let them. They may want me out of their way, but making them frustrated with me is never my intent. Sometimes I feel unsafe in my vehicle because of the risks other drivers take, so when I drive carefully I am driving the way I wish others did. It helps me think outside myself and care about total strangers even when I know they wouldn't do the same.

Most importantly, just like any other grandma on the road, I take forever to park. I have a bad feel for the size of my car, so I usually have to back up and pull into a space a second time. Even though I park on the street everyday outside my house, I still manage to be an incompetent parallel parker. I sometimes park down the street to avoid parallel parking anywhere near other car. This is embarrassing for me, especially with passengers on board. It teaches me to not look down on people for not having certain skills because I am aware of my imperfections as well.

Some individuals let the stresses of driving turn them into entirely different people. Though they are normally looked down upon, it seems that grandmas are the only drivers who can truly keep their cool when they are faced with the apparent stresses commonly associated with operating a vehicle. Driving like a grandma has made me a better person, so I am proud it has become a part of who I am. I'm sorry all you speed enthusiasts, but this stubborn young lady is not going to change any time soon, so look out! Grandma's coming through.